



## LEXINGTON-FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Feb. 4, 2009

Contact: Susan Straub  
Office: 859-258-3111  
Cell: 859-576-2564

# **Mayors call for immediate passage of White House stimulus plan for cities, counties**

Mayor Jim Newberry was one of 20 mayors who met with White House senior staff this morning to hear a discussion and provide input on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan, an Obama administration initiative to stimulate the economy and create jobs by funding important projects in cities and counties across the country. The mayors called upon Congress to pass the plan immediately.

“It’s clear that cities all over the country have not been able to afford many important local projects and also that we must stimulate our nation’s economy and get people back to work,” Newberry said. “Getting a recovery package passed is vitally important for Lexington and for many cities.”

Newberry said he left the meeting very hopeful that Lexington will receive significant funding for much needed projects, particularly for infrastructure projects. The mayors met with White House Senior Adviser and Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Relations and Public Liaison Valerie Jarrett; Director of Intergovernmental Affairs Cecilia Muñoz; Deputy Director of the National Economic Council Jason Furman; and Liaison to Mayors David Agnew, among other staff members.

The plan is now a bill that is making its way through Congress. The bill has passed the House. Newberry said Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell expects the Senate version of the legislation to pass this week. Then the bill will be sent to a conference committee to work out differences in the House and Senate bills. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has predicted final passage will come in mid-February.

“After speaking with Senator McConnell, I am hopeful that the legislation will pass in a few weeks,” Newberry said. On Tuesday the Mayor met with McConnell, and Rep. Ben Chandler and Rep. Hal Rogers, both members of the House Appropriations Committee. “It was my opportunity to explain the importance of the legislation to Lexington,” Newberry said.

Newberry anticipates that, under the final bill, Lexington would be best able to compete for funding in four areas identified by President Obama as priorities -- infrastructure, energy efficiency, electronic healthcare and education. Under the bill, a significant portion of the funds must be spent with a two-year period in order for the legislation to create badly needed jobs.

Newberry urged local citizens to contact members of their Congressional delegation and urge support for the bill.